ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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May 30, 2006

Mr. Sam Borries
Acting Chief, Response Section II
Emergency Response Branch
United States Environmental Protection Agency
77 West Jackson Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3590

Dear Mr. Borries:

I am requesting the Region 5 Offices of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) assign an On-Scene Coordinator to conduct a time-critical removal assessment at the CMC Properties Site located in Freeport, Stephenson County, Illinois.

Formerly operated by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, CMC Properties is an 18-acre former railroad right of way and switching yard area. The property is bordered by Stephenson Street to the south, Henderson to the east, several residential dwellings to the north, and the Pecatonica River to the west. The property contained several buildings, rail lines, underground storage tanks, and one abandoned gas station. Past remedial activities have addressed most of the environmental concerns on the property. Although most of the environmental concerns have been addressed, there is one area of concern that still exists. This area of concern is the purpose of this time-critical removal referral.

The City of Freeport has recently acquired the CMC Properties that has been designated to be used as part of a recreational bicycle trail. The city has retained the services of Fehr-Graham and Associates (Fehr-Graham) to gather information at the site. Fehr-Graham completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for the city in February 2002. A copy of the Phase I will be made available to U.S. EPA upon request.

On April 12, 2005, Illinois EPA and Fehr-Graham conducted limited soil sampling with the X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) Spectrum Analyzer. During the sampling activity, a debris area was discovered adjacent to an old ox-bow of the Pecatonica River. The debris consisted of slag, glass bottles, and several types of batteries and according to past information may have been present for up to 80 years. There was evidence of individuals digging holes within the debris and scavenging for antique bottles. XRF readings from this area indicated that lead levels ranged

from 3,000 ppm to 9,000 ppm. Additional sampling from the debris indicated lead levels as high as 45,399 ppm. Fehr-Graham has estimated that the size of the debris pile is about 60 feet by 600 feet by 8 feet in depth. Following the discovery of the debris area and the elevated lead levels, the City of Freeport placed signs around the area discouraging additional digging. Attached to this referral is a copy of a memo that summarizes past site activities and a map that illustrates the general location of the debris pile.

Before the time-critical removal process begins, Illinois EPA recommends that a meeting take place in order to discuss program goals and objectives for this project. At that time, Illinois EPA and the City of Freeport will also make available additional information and discuss how the Office of Site Evaluation can provide assistance throughout the removal assessment. Please have your On-Scene Coordinator arrange this meeting with me as soon as it becomes convenient.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with U.S. EPA in this and other future removal activities.

Sincerely,

Bruce Everetts
Office of Site Evaluation
Division of Remediation Management
Bureau of Land

bcc: BOL File, w/ attachments
Rockford FOS, w/ attachments
Linda Nachowicz, USEPA, w/o attachments, via e-mail
Gary King, DRM, w/o attachments, via e-mail
Jim Mergen, RPMS, w/o attachments
Michelle Tebrugge, OCR, w/o attachments